



## 299th Brigade Support Battalion

# The Heartbeat



January 2011



## From the Desk of the Command Team LTC Dale Farrand & CSM Franklin Jordan



### *Lifeline 6:*

It has been another great month for Lifeline – a month of landmarks and changes. Shortly after we assumed responsibility for sustaining Baghdad, we came upon the holiday season and the 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division “Old Ironsides”, our higher headquarters, was replaced by the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division “Tropic Lightning”. I would like to personally thank all of the Families and friends for their support by swamping us with Christmas decorations – the Soldiers of Lifeline were definitely in the holiday spirit as a result.

Besides the holidays, the battalion has been busy, busy, busy – conducting patrols almost nightly and remaining the only support battalion in all of Baghdad. We have been visited by everyone from the Brigade Command Sergeant Major to the Division Commander, and to the last – they are amazed at what Lifeline Soldiers do and do it well.

Besides the standard accolades – winning half of the bi-weekly Tropic Lightning Hero awards – promotions, re-enlistments, and Soldiers / NCOs of the month, Lifeline Soldiers were inducted into a couple of elite groups. First, every Soldier deployed with the Lifeline Battalion is now authorized to wear the Big Red One on their right sleeve – joining the roll of combat veterans of the oldest division in the United States Army. Secondly, we presented Combat Action and Medic Badges to 34 Lifeline Soldiers – a coveted award for actions on enemy contact that no one ever wants to earn twice.

We sent our first group of Soldiers out on non-chargeable Rest and Recuperation (R&R) leave and gave some deserving Soldiers four days at the Freedom Rest hotel here on Victory Base. Please ensure when you or your loved one comes home for R&R that you make the most of the two weeks. Finally – we are looking forward to celebrating Superbowl XLV in traditional American fashion – Go Bears!

Everything I just wrote about it is chronicled on the 299<sup>th</sup> Brigade Support Battalion Facebook page – check it out!

### *Lifeline 7:*

Greetings friends, relatives and most of all Family Members of the Lifeline Battalion. Happy New Years to all! Hopefully, you all had a great and wonderful holidays. Everyone here is safe and in good health. The morale of your Soldiers is great! Everyone has pulled together and demonstrated teamwork and unit cohesion. Your Soldiers are working long and hard hours to help make the Iraqi people safer, and their country a better place. I ask you all to continue to support one another, until your Soldiers return home safely. Thank you for all the support you have given these great warriors. Take care and May God continue to Bless you all.



*Lifeline — On Call to Serve!*

# Battalion News

## Chaplain's

Gracious God,  
We pray that You would give us joy to fill our days, peace to fill our hearts,  
and love to fill our lives. Thank You for the plans You have for us in this new  
year. We wait in anticipation to see all You will do! May we all remember  
during this new year that whatever befalls us, the Scriptures teach us that:

God is for you.

God loves you.

God will guide you.

God will not fail you.

God will be with you.

God will provide for you.

God will bless you.

God will give you rest.

God will strengthen you.

God will answer you.

God will uphold you.

God will keep you.

*"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper  
you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."  
Jeremiah 29:11*

## Soldier of the Month



SPC Josephat Ogoi



## NCO of the Month

SGT Shalota Williams

## "Combat Patch" Ceremony

On 1 January 2011, the Leaders and Soldiers of the 299th Brigade Support Battalion received their Right Shoulder Sleeve Insignia — Former Wartime Service patch which is more commonly referred as a "Combat Patch." The Soldiers wear the Big Red One which symbolizes selfless service with the 1st Infantry Division and join thousands of combat veterans who have serviced proudly with the division since 1917. The Fighting First has participated in more campaigns than any other division, writing its history in its blood and sweat from Cantigny, France, across North Africa, upon the beaches of Normandy, deep into Germany, through the jungles and tall grass of Vietnam, across the sands of Kuwait, the mountains of Afghanistan and here, in Iraq. These Soldiers join a long line of veterans who epitomize the motto:

**No mission too difficult, no sacrifice too great — Duty First!**





# Battalion News

## *A Taste of Home*

*By SFC Steven Lee and SPC Dawn Van Horn, HHC*

Even Saint Nick would be proud of the Christmas spirit at Camp Liberty, Iraq. As the Soldiers eagerly stand in line waiting for the dining facility to open, little do they know about all the immense preparation that goes into making holiday meals such a success. The De Fleury Dining Facility on Camp Liberty, Iraq is a prime example of the dedication and hard work of the staff in preparing and presenting a feast for the Soldiers. The staff understands that it is hard for an individual to be separated from their family at Christmas and being in Iraq makes it even more difficult. This holiday season, the Food Service Operation Specialists of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 299th Brigade Support Battalion and Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, with the help of the Kellogg Brown & Root (KBR) staff and 169 Kuwait Pearls Catering Company (KPCC) employees, a little piece of home was brought to the Soldiers.



Preparation to transform the dining facility into a winter wonderland began right after Thanksgiving. Behind curtains and closed doors, man-made displays carved out of Styrofoam were created by dedicated KPCC workers. Other workers hung crepe paper ornaments as well as carved displays from fruits and cakes. SPC Dawn VanHorn even created a detailed cake with the battalion's distinctive unit insignia. Workers and military personnel labored long hours over many days preparing and decorating for the Christmas meal. When asked why the DFAC goes through so much trouble every year, Virginia Rodriguez, KBR acting DFAC manager replied, "This is a way for us to give something back to the Soldiers for all that they do. They are out here away from their loved ones and for people like us at KBR, this is our way of repaying them for their service."

Soldiers dining at the De Fleury Dining Facility on Christmas enjoyed roast turkey, steamship round of beef, candied yams with marshmallows, and many other holiday favorites. Additionally they were provided the holiday staples of eggnog, sparkling cider and the deployment classic, non-alcoholic beer. All of these treats were served to each individual courtesy of their unit leadership to include battalion commanders, battalion command sergeant majors, company commanders, first sergeants, primary staff, platoon leaders, and platoon sergeants.

Additionally, the 25th Infantry Division and 1st Infantry Division commander and senior enlisted advisor visited with Soldiers at the DFAC. Each leader sat down with Soldiers to dine as well as share conversations and enjoy the holiday spirit. SFC Steven Lee, De Fleury Dining Facility NCOIC presented MG Vincent Brooks, 1st Inf. Div. commander, and CSM Jim Champagne, 1st Inf. Div. senior enlisted advisor, with 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade chef hats, aprons, and smocks, thus making them honorary Food Service Operation Specialists.



"Seeing the expressions on the faces of the service members and civilians who entered De Fleury during the meal hours definitely made it all worthwhile" noted SFC Lee. Everyone had plates full of delicious food, the atmosphere was festive, and even Jolly Saint Nick himself paid a visit, said Lee.

It may not be mom's home cooking, but for a short period of time here in Iraq, each service member could feel like they were a little closer to home.

# Battalion News

## Promotions

### January

**To PFC:** PFC Medoza, B Co

**To SPC:** SPC Browett, A Co; SPC Casillas, HHC;  
SPC Quigley, B Co; SPC Robinson, HHC; SPC Stortz, HHC



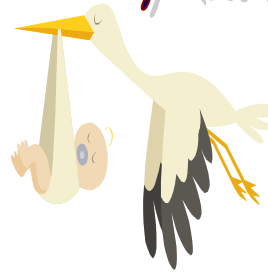
SSG O'Neal pins rank onto SPC Casillas during the HHC promotion ceremony on 1 January 2011.

299th Brigade Support Battalion would like to welcome our newest additions to the Lifeline Family!

Kiya Gibbs born to SPC Jay Gibbs, HHC

Rummer Maximus Quam born to SPC Christopher Quam, A Co

## Lifeline Baby Roll Call



Jayden Lee Marrero born to SGT Rodolfo Marrero, A Co

Zoey Isobel Denison born to SGT Dawna Rickman, C Co

Madison Smith born to SPC Nicholas Smith, B Co

Melvyn Allenpearl III born to PFC Melvyn Allenpearl, B Co

## Combat Badge Ceremony

On 9 January 2011, thirty-three Soldiers from the battalion were presented the Combat Action Badge (CAB) for being personally engaged by an instrument of war at the hands of the enemy on 19 December 2010. Additionally, two Soldiers received the Combat Medic Badge (CMB) for performing medical duties while engaged in active ground combat operations under enemy hostility on 19 December. COL Calvert (picture below left) and CSM Lewis, Commander and Senior Enlisted Advisor for the 2d Advise and Assist Brigade, attended the ceremony.



## Re-enlistments

Congratulations to the following Soldiers who re-enlisted in the Army over the past 30 days:

SSG Carter B Co

SGT Abiva A Co

SSG Olds, HHC

SGT Johnson, B Co





# Battalion News

## *Any Mission, Any Time*

*By CPT Jonathan Bingham, A Co Executive Officer*

At 0200 hours on the morning of Dec. 31, 2010, the lights in the 299th Brigade Support Battalion staging area illuminated five Heavy Equipment Transporter Systems (HETS), staged and ready for a mission to pick up four M1A1 Abram tanks at Joint Security Station Al Rashid, transport them across Baghdad, and deliver to Camp Taji.



In the pre-dawn darkness HETS operators completed their pre-operations Preventative Maintenance Checks and Services and Pre-combat Checks while cold rain fell and the ground turned to what felt like sticky clay and soupy mud.

The mission start time was set for 0600, but for the HETS operators mission success did not rest solely on actions commencing at the start time. Much of the mission's success rested on the preparation portion leading up to the start of the mission, with operators spending countless hours in the motor pool fulfilling their obligations to complete operator-level maintenance. Without the vital care required to keep these massive systems operating safely, the tractor trailer combination would never stand up to the demand of hauling 70 tons worth of one of

the modern Army's most advanced weapon systems across one of the largest cities in the world. Roads often lined with barriers, littered with cinder blocks and other obstacles can act as a hazard to tires blowing out. One mistake on the operator's part can have serious consequences for mission success.

Preparation for the mission started days before the execution date for the HETS operators. With five axle lines and 40 tires, SGT Marri Flores, who acted as truck commander on the mission, calls the HETS trailer "a formidable maintenance challenge."

The trailer operates on both air and hydraulic systems. Without which, the system has no hope for operation. The brakes are air over hydraulic, connected to the tractor by air lines and must have adequate pressure for proper operation. The hydraulic system aids the steering of the trailer via a system that transfers the steering from the tractor to the trailer, resulting in the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th axles steering as the trailer gooseneck pivots. "If this trailer steering mechanism is not properly aligned prior to operation it will cause the tires to stay in a tracking position and will result in blown tires and ultimately mission failure" said SSG James Ray. Therefore, preventative maintenance is imperative to mission success.

Upon arrival to JSS Al Rashid, HETS operators with Alpha Company linked up with members of Delta Company, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment. The size of the HETS necessitated the need for the M1A1s to be brought outside the JSS in order to load them.

The teamwork and partnership between the two units allowed for the completion of the joint mission to load the four M1A1 Abram tanks in less than one hour with zero negative incidents or injuries. Loading 70 ton pieces of equipment onto trailers in the rain and mud is inherently dangerous, but can be done safely when proper procedures are followed. The efficiency and safety with which the tanks were loaded is a testament to training and discipline on the parts of all units that were involved.

Upon arrival back to Victory Base Complex more than one day after the mission start, HETS operators conducted their weekly PMCS and got the trucks ready for their next mission, a perfect example of the company motto "Any mission, any time!"



# Battalion Family Readiness

## January 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 New Year's Day
2	3 USD 475 No School	4	5	6	7 Muster Meeting 1030 RCC	8
9	10	11 Steering Meeting 1100 Conference Rm	12	13 FRG Meeting 1830 Classroom (Alpha) No Dough Dinner	14 USD 475 No School	15
16	17 USD 475 No School Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	18 Battalion Potluck Luncheon 1200 Classroom	19	20 Care Team Training - Annex 6pm Yellow Ribbon Social - Harry's 6pm	21 USO Movie Night	22 Day Trip- TBD
23 30	24 31	25	26	27	28 No Dough Dinner	29

## February 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 FRG Leaders Lunch	2 Groundhog Day	3 Chinese New Year	4 Muster Meeting 1030 RCC	5
6	7	8 Steering Meeting 1100 Conference Rm	9	10 FRG Meeting 1830 Classroom (Bravo)	11 No Dough Dinner	12
13	14 St. Valentine's Day	15 Battalion Potluck Luncheon 1200 Classroom	16	17	18	19
20	21 USD 475 No School President's Day	22 Washington's Birthday	23	24	25 No Dough Dinner	26 Daytrip
27	28					

# Battalion Family Readiness

## *Resolutions to Get More Involved in the FRG* *By Mrs. Kristen Farrand, Battalion FRG Senior Advisor*

January has always been a time for looking back to the past, and more importantly, forward to the coming year. It is a time to reflect on the changes we want (or need) to make and resolve to follow through on those changes. It is always easier to make changes that we want with support from others. Here are five of the top ten resolutions and how getting involved with your Family Readiness Group (FRG) can help.

1. Spend More Time with Family and Friends: No one wants to feel lonely or left out. In our busy lives, we often forget to make time to connect with others. Make a point to come to an event at the 299<sup>th</sup> Battalion Headquarters in January and throughout 2011. Every month, the FRG hosts an evening meeting and a potluck luncheon. Connecting with others going through the same deployment issues certainly helps in many ways.
2. Get Fit: After all of those holiday meals complete with cookies and tons of chocolate, it is no wonder that this resolution makes it on the top ten list each and every year. As you get out there and exercise, don't forget to send in your miles to your FRG Leader. As a Battalion, we are "Walking to Iraq and Back", which means we have 11 more months to cover the 13,000 miles collectively.
3. Enjoy Life More: There is more to life than the routine of sleeping, working, and sleeping. In January, we will start a Saturday Day Trips Group. The current date for this month is Saturday 22 January, and we will be leaving from the Battalion Parking lot for a day away. Kansas has many great sites and experiences within a couple hours drive. Let's experience the best of Kansas together!
4. Learn Something New: ACS has a program for that! At each of our monthly evening FRG meetings, we will have a featured guest speaker that will present helpful information on a variety of topics; Social Media and OPSEC, Financial Readiness, Parenting Skills, just to name a few. If you have the time, and are interested in a week long course (complete with free childcare), The Resilient Spouse Academy is a premiere Army Program available right here on Ft. Riley. Check it out!
5. Help Others: This is really what Army Life is really about. There are so many volunteer opportunities with your FRG, USO, Red Cross, Army Community Service, etc.... The list could go on and on. Why not start with something as simple as helping one person get connected? Find another military spouse that is struggling and become a mentor. One person making a difference in the life of another is a very powerful gift!

Whatever your personal goals are for 2011, don't forget that people all around you are setting the same goals for themselves. Personal success is often easier to achieve with the support of others. Come on out for an FRG event this month and get connected!

## Rear Detachment

### *By CPT Suzanne Eldridge, Rear Detachment Commander*

We hope this letter finds you in good spirits! Now that the holidays are over and month two of the deployment has passed, we are gearing up for the garrison missions to come. The detachment is busy getting Lifeline Soldiers ready to deploy; flights leaving a few times a month. We are incorporating Families into the battalion and ensuring the lines of communication are constant and dependable. To ensure we have the most accurate contact data possible, please remember to contact your FRG leaders if you are planning on doing any traveling or moving out of the area. You can contact your Rear Detachment and FRG leadership at the numbers and emails on the last page of this newsletter (you can also find us on Facebook!).

The 299<sup>th</sup> Rear Detachment Team are thankful for the safety and success of our partners downrange, and we hope you and your Family find great happiness and prosperity in the year to come!

# Headquarters & Headquarters Company

## *S1 Soldiers Deliver Mail During the Holidays*

*By CPT Jacque Ralston, Battalion Postal Officer*

Some individuals may be familiar with the old saying, "Rain, Snow, Sleet or Hail," the mail must be delivered. However, for the Soldiers running the postal operations for the 299<sup>th</sup> Brigade Support Battalion in Camp Liberty, Iraq the reality they face is a little different – rain, mud, dust, or heat. The mail clerks of the battalion, led by the postal officers CPT Jacqueline Ralston and SSG Barbara Robb, are working every day – picking up mail from the Joint Military Mail Terminal at Baghdad International Airport, transporting it to the battalion headquarters, sorting and distributing it – to ensure the Soldiers receive their letters and packages regardless of the weather conditions. Facing the rainy season and the resulting muddy conditions has not slowed the postal operations in the battalion. "With the Christmas season upon us, we are busier than ever. The S1 is pushing packages out as quickly as we get them in" remarked SSG Robb, the current S1 NCOIC for the battalion. "The Soldiers are working hard to ensure everyone receives their notes and care packages from loved ones back home."



The postal officers and mail clerks understand that receiving mail can positively affect morale. They also recognize that during the holiday season, good morale is especially important for Soldiers who are separated from their Families and may be missing home. SPC Deanna Francois is the battalion's primary mail clerk and helped establish the postal operations for the battalion upon their arrival in November. "It is always great to see Soldiers finding out they have mail. I love seeing the smiles on their faces when they receive it" she said. SGT Nathan Allen, HHC 299<sup>th</sup> BSB, is one of those Soldiers. After receiving a package from a family who adopted him through the "Adopt a Soldier" program, he stated, "Getting mail at Christmas time is even more significant than getting it throughout the year because it shows that people are thinking about us over here. It definitely helps us get through the holidays."

Conducting mail operations for just under two months in the theater, the 299<sup>th</sup> BSB has processed and delivered over 1900 packages and 400 letters. Additionally, the mail clerks constantly coordinate with other battalions within the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advise and Assist Brigade to ensure that Soldiers from the 299<sup>th</sup> BSB who are located on remote forward operating bases (FOBs) are receiving their mail as well. The mailroom Soldiers do not anticipate a decline in the amount of mail inbound to the battalion after the holidays because they know that their Families will still be supporting them after the Christmas season. "There are a lot of loved ones back home who are taking time to send us mail" noted SPC Francois. "I want them to know how much we appreciate it and look forward to seeing our names on envelopes and boxes. It really helps us feel their encouragement and love even though we are far away."



*Top Right:* Packages are stacked and organized outside the battalion mailroom

*Middle Left:* SPC Francois sorts through Accountable Mail

*Bottom Right:* SPC Lee separates packages by company in the mailroom





# Headhunters



*Top Left:* 1LT Mouton qualifies on the 9mm pistol during a range

*Top Right:* SGT Brown receives his Army Good Conduct Medal from LTC Farrand

*Top Right:* SPC Manuel, CSD, prepares to fire a non-lethal round at a familiarization range

*Middle Left:* CPT Brownlee and 1SG Giddens stand in front of their company prior to the combat patch ceremony

*Bottom Left:* COL Calvert, 2d AAB Commander, talks with SPC Neighoff as he toured the battalion headquarters

*Bottom Middle:* CW3 Santiago enjoys tea during a meeting with local Iraqi Federal Police

*Bottom Right:* CPT Leon places Specialist rank on newly promoted SPC Stortz

# Alpha Company

## *Highlighting Distribution Platoon*

*By 1LT Dallas Ketchum, Platoon Leader*

The distribution platoon is comprised of two sections: transportation and ammunition. The transportation section is headed by 1LT Ketchum, the Platoon Leader (PL), and SSG Sampson, the Platoon Sergeant (PSG). Both leaders arrived in the 299<sup>th</sup> Brigade Support Battalion shortly before the deployment and have hit the ground running since arriving here in Iraq. The Ammo section is operated under the direction and expertise of the Ammo Technician CW2 Gonzales, who is responsible for the operations of the Ammo Supply Point (ASP). The platoon, though small in number compared to similar distribution platoons, is highly efficient in the execution of the myriad missions that are tasked to the platoon. It is fitting that our company logo switched to the Atlas, because our unique mission and the fact that we are the workhorse of the 299<sup>th</sup> BSB and the 2<sup>d</sup> Advise and Assist Brigade (AAB).

On any given day the distribution platoon may be called upon to support one of the various Combat Logistical Patrols (CLPs) the battalion may run to other Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) in the area of operation. The various CLPs may require the skills of the PL to run a mission as the Convoy Commander, while some of the Soldiers are tasked to drive one or more of the vehicles such as a Palletized Load System (PLS) or the Heavy Equipment Transporter System (HETS). These are massive trucks that can haul everything from a 20 foot CONNEX to a 60 plus ton M1 Abrams battle tank with the technologically advanced trailer system. No matter what the mission calls for, the Soldiers of the distribution platoon stand ready to deliver.



The Ammunition Section is responsible for the operation of the ASP. The Atlas Soldiers are diverse in their skill sets because they have cross trained in the areas and responsibilities of the 89B MOS in order to support the ASP mission. The Soldiers assigned to the ASP are comprised of a variety of MOS backgrounds, such as 92As (Automated Logistical Specialist) and 92Fs (Petroleum Supply Specialists) for example, along with the organic 89B (Ammunition Specialist).

The distribution platoon was quite busy during the month of December. The Soldiers and NCOs performed superbly in order to bring about successful mission accomplishment. In addition to the transportation and ammunition missions, the Atlas distribution PL is responsible for sling load operations in the battalion.

The Atlas sling load team is comprised of Soldiers from all four platoons in Alpha Company. The team conducted the first sling load mission since arriving here in Iraq on 22 DEC 2010. The sling load team leader, or Officer in Charge (OIC), 1LT Ketchum, prepared the team for the first mission by conducting a training refresher for the individual team members. SPC Lee, who works in the headquarters section, was the lead Soldier for the team, providing her guidance and skill along with SPC Haffner (from 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon) and first timers PFC Cenicola and PFC Jackson (from 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon). Although these Soldiers have had few opportunities to put their skills into action, their performance was outstanding.

Overall every large logistical movement in the brigade incorporates some part of the Atlas distribution platoon. The transportation and ammunition Soldiers are an indispensable part of the Lifeline and Atlas team.





# Atlas



*Top Left:* SGT Schamber looks on as SPC Becker prepares the forklift for transport of HAZMAT.

*Top Right:* SPC Simental prepares the generator for operation to power up the transportation maintenance office.

*Bottom Left:* SGT Flores is preparing her HET for the QA/QC process in order to be dispatched for an upcoming mission.

*Bottom Right:* SGT Flores instructs PFC Mackey and PV2 Walker on proper operation of the Wench Pulley system on the HET.

*Left Page:* A HET is parked, ready to start a mission of moving M1A1s.



# Bravo Company

*Be the Best... Be a Bandit*

*By 2LT Nathaniel Bradley, Platoon Leader*



Bravo Company, 299th Brigade Support Battalion, 2d Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division has been working extremely hard to keep up with the progressive workload here on Camp Liberty, Iraq and out-reaching areas. Each section is growing more accustomed with their surroundings as well as more difficult tasking. From the many preventative maintenance checks for outgoing convoys into the greater Baghdad area, to the growing assistance to surrounding battalions in vehicle, equipment, motor pool, and weapon maintenance, Bravo Company has been growing in physical capabilities and confidence every week to make this deployment an effective time.

Bravo Company's S&R section has been working diligently not only at daily shop operations but also to assist in the dismantling of unnecessary offices found on unused motor pools in the surrounding area. SGT Metoyer states that "the job will always take some time but we as a section are pushing through and getting them done as best we can." After already completing two separate motor pools in the month of December and working to start renovation on three more, this section will be hard chargers throughout their time in Iraq.

The GSE section, which has the daily tasks of generator repairs, has also been pushing themselves with the tasks of fork-lift and crane repairs which are never an easy feat. SSG Carreon states, "Each day is a challenge but we are taking advantage of every second we have to get the equipment back to work." The Armament section too is working hard and moving around a lot even outside of their comfort zone. They assist other units with proper maintenance of various weapon systems. This reinforces other battalion's ability to continue to work with their counterparts in the greater Baghdad area, which helps to provide security not only for coalition forces but also the local civilian population.

Bravo Company's Maintenance section is working to the limit with jobs coming in everyday for basic preventative maintenance of vehicles going out on mission. As one of the backbones of the brigade, this section alone has completed a total of 211 jobs in the month of December with more jobs coming in everyday. In addition to the workload in this section, many Soldiers are assisting to prepare for classes that instruct the Iraqi Army. With two separate Iraqi units asking for instructors to teach about vehicle specifications, preventive maintenance, and diagnosing mechanical problems, Field Maintenance finds itself quite occupied. This task has become one of the most important taskings Bravo has received for the deployment, and we are ensuring that we give our best to our counterparts and letting them have the best trained personnel before we depart their country.



Overall Bravo Company is determined to make this deployment a success. With the more work that continues to flow into the various sections every day, and the ongoing process of diminishing our presence in the sovereign country of Iraq our areas of responsibilities increase as other units and civilians leave the country. This assists in making the time pass much more quickly, and keeps us quite busy, to the day where we can come home and be with our Families and loved ones.





# Bandits



**Top Left:** COL Calvert presents Coins of Excellence to SGT House and SPC Vorreyer

**Top Right:** PFC Schirmer receives a Certificate of Achievement from LTC Farrand for being the Division "Lightning Hero of the Week"

**Middle Left:** SSG Carreon conducts a platoon meeting

**Middle Right:** Ready to run the Disney Half Marathon: SGT Smith (B), PFC Foreman (CSD), PFC Martin (B), PFC Schirmer (B), WO1 Beattie (B) and SFC Massie (B)

**Bottom Right:** Half marathon complete!



# Charlie Company

## Commander



Hello, this is CPT Roberts. I hope everyone had a wonderful Holiday Season. I would like to say what a joy it is to know that you all stand behind this company with your support! Thank you all so much for the gifts, cards, and care packages; they have helped as we are apart from Family and friends and we all really appreciate it. This past month has been a great month; several of our Soldiers have turned another year old and the NCOs of the Cobra Company put on a great Christmas Party and even had our own personal appearance of Santa Clause. There is a saying around New Year's, "Out with the old and in with the new." Well, Charlie Company has a new name; we are now "Charlie Cobras." So, seasons greeting to our Cobra Family and Happy New Year. My wish is that this year will bring you all many blessings.

As always have a GREAT DAY! This is Cobra 6 signing out.

## First Sergeant

Hello, Cobra Family! Yes, COBRA Family as Charlie Company has officially changed to the COBRAS. We are now in the "Business as Usual" phase of the deployment as the Soldiers have adapted well and are imbedded in medical support operations. I pray that everyone had a Happy Holiday Season! Although it's better to be with loved ones, the Soldiers made the very best of the occasion with a Christmas Party at the TMC. SSG Cassidy along with SSG Cruz and SGT Good-Hallahan, aka Santa and her Helpers, arrived at battalion on Christmas Day to whisk LTC Farrand and CSM Jordan away to Riva Ridge TMC. CSM Jordan was extremely impressed with the Christmas décor throughout the TMC as well as the Soldiers' level of motivation.

The Commander and I are pleased to see high spirits of the Soldiers. We also appreciate their enthusiastic efforts in supporting Combined Medical Engagements (CME) missions and combat logistic patrols as we realize how contagious enthusiasm is. We now venture forward. As always, it is an absolute pleasure to be work with the finest Soldiers in the United States Army! Please continue to keep us in your prayers and we will do the same.

1SG William Barnes  
Cobra 7 Out



## Headquarters Platoon

5...4...3...2...1... Happy New Year from everyone here in the Training and Operations room.

After two months of being in country we have nestled into a normal routine of physical fitness, company slides, and end of month reports. The holidays were enjoyed by all despite the fact that our Family and loved ones were so far away. We received packages from our Families as well as concerned families, schools and children from across the United States. We have all become adjusted to the rainy season that is currently upon us, muddy boots and dirty floors will be our way of life for awhile. We welcomed a new face to the "Cobra Team" this month; PFC Christina Quigley arrived to us from Echo Company, 1-63. R&R leave begins in January and Soldiers are looking forward to the much deserved time off as well as time spent with Family. The "Cobra Team" appreciates your commitment to our Soldiers and the mission we serve, especially during the holidays when times can be a little rough. Until next time this is Training and Operations signing off.



# Cobras

## Evacuation Platoon

"It's not about counting the days; it's about making the days count." The evacuation platoon has had the opportunity to share Thanksgiving in our first few weeks and recently Christmas and New Year's. The holidays have come and gone faster than we all have expected. Nonetheless, with keeping team and Family unity during the trying times that we would rather spend with our Families, the platoon has stuck together without missing a beat in our overall mission. Even though we are all far away from home, the platoon treated the holidays as if they were being celebrated back at home; including having a party on Christmas day. However, shortly after Christmas day both the treatment and evacuation platoons were challenged with a MASCAL exercise. Two MASCAL exercises were completed this month with precision. On each occasion, calls were made to the evacuation office and information was put out about the location and approximately the number of patients and their condition. The patients were either brought to our aid station "Riva Ridge", or taken to the CSH depending on the severity of the injuries. These types of exercises are implemented to keep the medical teams on top of their medical training and readiness. In addition to MASCAL exercises the platoon has been able to come together and choose a Soldier with every shift to teach a different course. The courses vary from obtaining vitals to assembling an oxygen tank properly including many others. With the combination of hard work and dedication the platoon has successfully completed many missions to various places working with other units. Due to our unified efforts the transition has been a great success and we collectively have been able to find a battle rhythm that works well for everyone. As a result, each and every Soldier has the ability to reach their goals together and make each and every day count.



## Preventative Medicine

Preventive Medicine (PM) plays a vital role in the continuing health and welfare of the brigade's 4,000 Soldiers and 14 Joint Security Sites (JSS) and Forward Operating Bases (FOB). Among the many duties PM performs are air, soil, and water testing, vector control, and Base Camp Assessments (BCA). Thus far, PM has travelled to all the JSSs and FOBs and completed the BCAs. However, travelling and assessing these areas hardly means that the work is done.

A day in the life of a PM Soldier or Officer is far from uneventful. Preparing for a mission requires in depth planning and coordination from the mode of transportation (air or ground) to the equipment necessary to perform the mission. For example, if PM travels by air, the amount of equipment that can be brought along is limited to the current air guidelines, but movement by ground is limited only by what the mission requires. Once on ground, PM walks everywhere on the designated JSS or FOB in order to provide the most accurate assessment of the medical treatment facilities/battalion aid stations, dining facility, latrines, showers, living areas, trash receptacles, trash pit, field sanitation teams, and pest/animal situations. In addition they take air, water, and soil samples at varying locations throughout the JSS and FOBs. The water and soil samples are time sensitive with the water samples having to be tested within eight hours and the soil samples required to be sent back to the Public Health Command in the United States within 48 hours of taking the sample.



# Charlie Company

## PM cont.

Finishing the onsite BCA means that PM's job is only beginning. Once back to the home site, an official report has to be written, water samples have to be tested, and soil samples have to be sent. In addition, planning for the next mission must occur. When the BCA is totally complete, a corrective course of action must be devised and implemented. Once the corrections have been made, the process begins all over again the following month. It is imperative that PM stays current on all areas of responsibility because PM's mission is to assess medical threats and advise the command on Preventive Medicine measures, maintain oversight of the Field Sanitation Teams, and conduct medical surveillance of Disease and Non Battle Injuries (DNBI). PM's job affects all Soldiers, and their efforts ensure that everyone can return home safely.



## Treatment Platoon

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Riva Ridge Troop Medical Clinic where Task Force Cobra Family stands tall in the foxhole wishing you all a happy holiday. We are now two months into the deployment, our journey supporting Operation New Dawn; we have finally established a battle rhythm which encompasses a long list of tasks, such as sick call operations, Forward Operating Base training, Continued Medical Education CME missions, Combat Logistical Patrols, and a plethora amount of medical exercises. The medics along with the ancillary personnel have already established a standard within the brigade and Camp Liberty, if you would like to have great patient care, go to Riva Ridge TMC.

Speaking of ancillary, SGT Szpara, our laboratory technician at Riva Ridge TMC instructed over 40 medics, encompassing treatment platoon along with evacuation platoon on multiple classes about laboratory operations and procedures. His level of expertise and knowledge has created a clear picture of how important laboratory technicians really are in the overall scheme of things dealing with patient care. SGT Szpara started by providing clear and concise information about phlebotomy, breaking down what a regular medic would not think is important, the proper procedures. The first thing is the proper order of tubes to be used and when they should be drawn, in the correct order. The Soldiers were afforded the opportunity to do hands on to ensure they had a better sense of awareness when drawing blood with the correct colored tubes and the placement of tubes for the time of draw. Once the reasoning for why which tube is first and which is last, made a lasting impression for the Soldiers attending the class. He also went over needle safety, which is not only for the patient, but for the phlebotomist and or medic as well. When looking at the whole picture, you must put all of these tasks in order to provide quick and reliable test results for the proper diagnosis of the patient in your care.

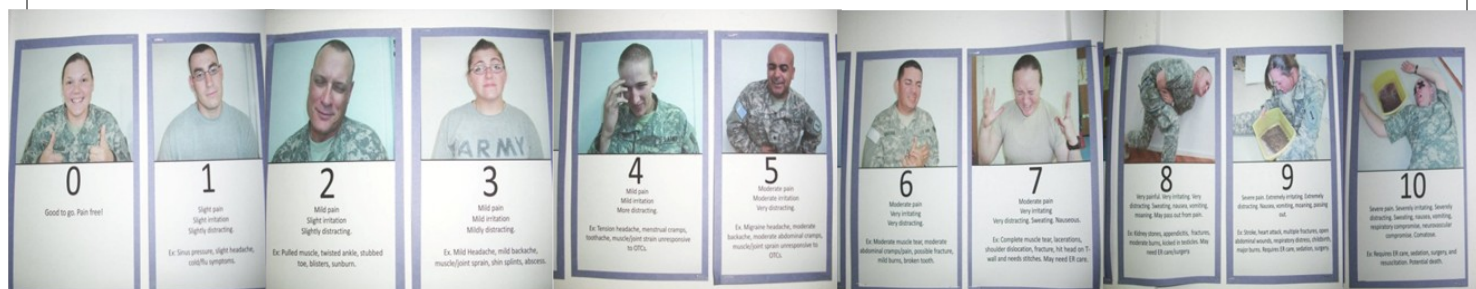


CPT Parker, PA, with her infinite wisdom along with SGT Good-Hallahan has brought new light to the pain scale of patient care. Their idea was to have the scale range from zero to ten, measuring pain saying no pain, to the worst pain you have ever felt. The pictures that are shown express the pain level you will see when evaluating patients (see pictures on the top of the next page). The medics and the patients that were involved in designing this product have been put in for nominees for an Emmy award. When patients look at the matrix, they then start to understand what the scale is used for, but in all honesty, we were just having fun, enjoying our jobs and trying to make the patients feel a little better.

The Mighty Treatment Platoon would like to send a shout out to all of our friends, Families, and Soldiers alike. Wishing everyone a safe and Happy Holiday. You are constantly in our thoughts and prayers. We understand it is not easy being away, but we have started a journey and we must complete our mission. T-Rock Med signing off.



# Closing Notes



**Resilient Spouse Academy**

**A Strong Community Starts with a Strong Community Network**

**Course Includes:**

- Suicide Intervention
- Responding to reports of abuse or neglect
- Master Resilience Training
- Financial Resilience

**-Jan 21/22, 28/29, & Feb 5**  
(All schedule evening 1900-2100 SAT, all day 0700-1900 SAT, and all day SAT)

**-Jan 24-28**

**-Mar 7-11**

**-April 8/9, 15/16, & 23**  
(All schedule evening 1900-2100 SAT, all day 0700-1900 SAT, and all day SAT)

**-Jun - 20-24**

**-Aug 12/13, 19/20, & 27**  
(All schedule evening 1900-2100 SAT, all day 0700-1900 SAT, and all day SAT)

**To be part of the network call: 785.239.9435**

## Enterprise Elementary Partnership

On behalf of all the Soldiers and Leaders of the 299th BSB, we want to thank the students and teachers at Enterprise Elementary School in Enterprise, Kansas for their wonderful cards, pictures, and artwork that they sent to the unit over Christmas. We truly appreciated all the cards and notes.

A bulletin board in the battalion's headquarters building proudly displays a sampling of the students' work for all the Soldiers to enjoy!

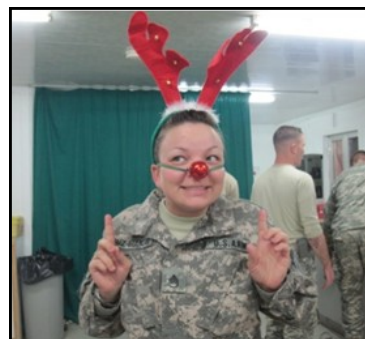


## KSU Athletics Partnership

Support our Kansas State University Athletic Partner — the Track and Field Team — at some of their upcoming meets!

15 January	vs. KSU Invitational
16 January	Kansas State High School Invitational
22 January	vs. Wildcat Invitational
18 February	vs. KSU Open

All of the indoor meets are in Ahearn Field House on the KSU campus and admission is free.







*We are "On Call to Serve"*



## *Battalion FRG Leadership*

Position	Name	Phone Number	E-mail
Commander	LTC Dale Farrand		dale.farrand@us.army.mil
Battalion CSM	CSM Franklin Jordan		franklin.jordan@us.army.mil
FRG Advisor	Kristen Farrand	785.784.9973	299bsbfrg@gmail.com
FRSA	Sabrena Stalnaker	785.239.5539	sabrena.stalnaker@us.army.mil

## *Company FRG Leadership*

Company	Name	Phone Number	E-mail
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Alpha Company FRG Leader	Sarah Perkins Henry Kevern	360.441.6664 520.358.6233	alphaavalanche@gmail.com
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Bravo Company FRG Leader	Cathleen Korte	910.584.4467	bcobandits@gmail.com
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HHC FRG Leader	Tammy Bowen Misty Watson	785.784.4215 785.784.9997	hhtheadhunters@gmail.com
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